

From: Dan Andrews
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Public Comment Period for United States vs. Microsoft

As a computer technician for the USAF prior to retirement, I have followed the DOJ/Microsoft situation since its very inception. Now that I am retired and building computers as a hobby, I still find myself following this lengthy period of legal litigation. To what end will companies like Sun, Netscape, AOL and Yahoo go in order to achieve what they consider a "final justice"?

The process of "using" the government in order to stifle competition is within itself not only an abuse of legal authority, but an abuse of the American legal system itself. When we were children and had the problem of having to face the bully in our neighborhood, didn't we run home to get our "big brother" to stand up for us? The same applies here with the Plaintiffs in this case. Some 20 years ago Mr. Gates had the foresight to see and understand the critical importance of the personal computer in the average work and home environment, and now for the past few years nothing has been done to reward that foresight, comprehension and understanding of how important the computer industry would become. Not only in the business industry market, but the home market as well.

Instead, the companies fighting Microsoft have "in my humble opinion" done nothing but criticize and ridicule Microsoft and Mr. Gates in the courts and in the media. When in fact, if it had not been for Microsoft "grabbing the bull by the horns" and establishing a "standard" in the computer world with its' operating system, we would not have such things as the home computer or the internet. None of the popular programs we use today would be able to interface with one another in order to function. Somewhere there has to be a common bond and Microsoft established that bond long ago with its operating system.

Intel was in there at the beginning but decided to pull out of the manufacture of an operating system. That was a business decision that they made at the time given the facts and circumstances of the time. Now, here it is 20 or so years later, and I don't hear or read about Intel complaining about Microsoft at all. When are the Plaintiffs going to learn that they must live by the decisions that they make whether or not it is a "good" decision?

The reason being is because of the standard that Microsoft was able to establish from the very beginning. Instead of the legal fight to end a "monopoly" controlled by Microsoft, it would be a fight in the sense that none of the software that we use and enjoy today would be compatible with each other. An analogy would be your automobile. If you buy a Chevy automobile, you can replace the Delco radio originally installed at the factory with another brand (most often made in Japan), but the automobile

itself remains Chevy. You can change the tires, but it is still a Chevy. The same applies in this situation with Microsoft. There has to be a root standard in the computer software industry to allow for compatibility among other software programs. Microsoft established that standard a long time ago. It's called "foresight" for those of you that don't know or understand.

To make a long story short, I agree with the DOJ/Microsoft settlement in its entirety. I also believe that a final end should come to this legal wrangling by advising the aforementioned Plaintiffs that if it had not been for Microsoft, they would not be in the business they are in now. It is my belief that the legal actions brought by the Plaintiffs in this case (Netscape, Yahoo, AOL, Time-Warner, etc, et-al..) only brought this situation upon the computer world out of jealousy and greed of the market share that Microsoft holds.

My only regret is that I did not purchase any shares of stock in Microsoft when it first went public. Here is a question for you. Do "ANY" of the Plaintiffs in this case own "ANY" shares of Microsoft? And if so, why? Would you purchase stock in a company that you thought had been cheating the rest of the world?

Simply put, it is a situation of "who thought of it first". And Microsoft (Bill Gates) did just that, he thought of it first. And if Microsoft and Mr. Gates are such the criminals as depicted, then why would Bill Gates and Microsoft forego the millions of dollars that it has in support of Apple Computer? Apple Computer has a completely different operating system than Microsoft, yet I don't hear Apple Computer complaining either.

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